

Daily Eagle

A JAPANESE FAMILY.

A NOBLE FATHER, A TENDER MOTHER
AND LOVELY CHILDREN.

Careful Training of the Sons and Daughters—Several Interesting Customs—Reverent Beliefs of Many Generations—A Pile of Charms.

In this home an ex-daimio and family dwelled, with whom I exchanged frequent hospitalities during my sojourn in Japan. As I was one of the family in which the daimio's youngest brother and eldest son had found a home while pursuing their education in America, I was cordially received by the ex-prince in turn. The family then consisted of his wife, two little girls, two grown daughters, and three sons—one a baby—and the grandmother of these children—a charming old lady—three nurses, and a large retinue of servants.

The father was a noble specimen of devotion to his country, yet, withal, an apostle of progress. He was one of the many who had consented to the destruction of the old government, and had voluntarily yielded his revenues and title without a murmur, for the public good. The lady mother and eldest daughter were peers of the ladies of any land in their love of beauty, ornament, elegant dress, and neatness, and in their skill in household management, as well as in those social amenities and tactics of polite circles that etiquette prescribes.

This mother was as strong in tenderness, patience and long suffering for and with her children as her European or American sisters, and equally faithful and assiduous in their training and education, according to her knowledge. She taught her daughters as her mother had taught her, that the three fundamental duties of woman are obedience to her parents when a child, obedience to her husband when married, and obedience to her eldest son, if she becomes a widow.

She also instructed them from the Japanese Ladies' Library, which is a compendium of the moral and physical duties of woman. It includes the subjects of household and social management, rules for the strictest etiquette, a guide to letter writing, proverb, poems from a hundred authors, memoirs of noble women, and ordering for the whole conduct of life. They were likewise taught to read the standard histories of Japan in Chinese characters, and both boys and girls were thoroughly drilled in the traditional heroic, and mythological lore of their own land.

The sons were trained to mainly sports and exploits, and their ambition fired by historic tales of heroes. They were urged to overcome obstacles, by the symbol over the massive outer door, where swung the huge paper carp suspended from a bamboo pole, ever reminding the youth of Japan how the carp leaps the waterfall. These lads were also taught natural sciences and military tactics, from English and Dutch authors. Often in their half holidays have I found them constructing miniature earth works, by the aid of book, diagram and trowel.

Then came the tutor with lessons in fencing and wrestling, and the use of cross spears and swords, in the handling of which they became marvelously expert. The father instructed the sons in the Chinese classics himself, and stimulated their young souls by tales of classic lore.

One of the interesting customs I thus learned of in the life of this house was that of the many festivals—the Feast of the Dolls for the daughters of the house, when year after year the great nursery was decked with blooming boughs, and the many toys in which Japan abounds, while a pretty mimic life of motherhood and housekeeping prevailed for one whole day; of the Feast of the Farmers, when the boys were marched out in triumph to the streets, with emblazoned banners to end a mimic war; of the New Year's day, when prince and retainers, master and servants, pledged anew their devotion to each other, and received gifts of good things; of the religious festivals, when the master's household, like a great heart, beat for the birth and death, the joy and sorrow, of his tenantry.

Here, for two centuries, the daughters of the house had been given in marriage, without spoken vow or priestly rite; but by gift and song, dance and cheer, began their new career. From thence had gone out the father to Yedo or Fuku on public or private business—the sons for ambition and culture, the daughters for travel or religious duty. These walls had echoed with songs and laughter, with cries and sob. Here, in time of bereavement, in the oratory of the house where the sacred lights and incense burn, one after another black tablet was set, gilt-lettered, to be honored by later generations.

In the path by the old shrine, made sacred by the reverent beliefs of generations, I took my final leave of this interesting family. I asked for a memento from its hallowed contents, and the ex-prince gave me a cup of light wool, containing an amulet written in Sanskrit and Chinese, for the protection of this ancient house; and as I passed out of the great gate, I stood under a pile of charms a foot in thickness, which had been added year by year, to ward off sickness and harm.—Helen S. H. Thompson in Overland Monthly.

A claim shall have been put up in the music hall at Boston, the newspapers of that city center speak of it as the "love reactor."

W. E. Barrett, managing editor of The Boston Advertiser, is only 26 years old. He speaks of himself as the "baby editor."

Abraham Lincoln, grandfather of the great Abraham Lincoln, was slain by an Indian's tomahawk one hundred years ago.

Glasgow has now the best facilities for landing, keeping and slaughtering foreign cattle of any city in Great Britain.

Leland Stanford is conspicuous for being the only senator who displays absolutely no jewelry on his person.

A couple put off applying for a divorce one term of court so they could profit by their tin wedding.

The venerable philanthropist, Mr. W. W. Corcoran, will not sit down until he has raised the chair.

There is nothing, affirms Mrs. Grundy, quite so artificial to-day as New York fashionable hospitality.

Gin saws have deprived 100 persons of their hands and arms in Alabama this year.—Chicago Times.

Spurgeon is afflicted with rheumatic gout, which, he says, has completely benumbed his intellect.

Short Sighted Idolatry.

In the course of a talk at Germantown Marion Harland said: "Our girls should be something more than the pet and toy of the father or the idol of the mother, hung all over with lace and jewels she cannot afford. There is too much short sighted idolatry in American homes. Mothers are to blame for allowing daughters to grow away from them. It is their duty to understand their daughters' affairs, to be merciful to her escapades, tolerant of her crudities. If mothers have forgotten their own youthful follies it would be well to resort and review them.—Philadelphia Times.

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And select one of those elegant Cutters, of which they have a fine stock both as to style and finish, single or double. Also a stock of runners for converting your buggies into a sleigh, at prices to suit the times.

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